

Department of Veterans Affairs

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(2) Remain a VA employee for the duration of the scholarship award.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7612(c)(3)(B))

(c) Any applicant who, at the time of application, owes a service obligation to any other entity to perform service after completion of the course of study is ineligible to receive a scholarship under the Department of Veterans Affairs Scholarship Program.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7602(b))

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 2900-0352)

[47 FR 10810, Mar. 12, 1982, as amended at 48 FR 37399, Aug. 18, 1983; 54 FR 28674, July 7, 1989; 78 FR 51070, Aug. 20, 2013]

§ 17.603 Availability of HPSP scholarships.

(a) *General.* A HPSP scholarship will be awarded only when necessary to assist VA in alleviating shortages or anticipated shortages of personnel in the health professions stated in paragraph (b) of this section. VA will determine the existence of shortage of personnel in accordance with specific criteria for each health care profession. VA has the authority to establish the number of scholarships to be awarded in a fiscal year, and the number that will be awarded to full-time and part-time students.

(b) *Qualifying fields of education.* VA will grant HPSP scholarships in a course of study in those disciplines or programs where recruitment is necessary for the improvement of health care of veterans. Those disciplines or programs are listed in 38 U.S.C. 7401(1) and (3).

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7401(1), (3), 7612(b)(2), 7612(b)(4), and 7603(b)(1))

[78 FR 51070, Aug. 20, 2013]

§ 17.604 Application for the HPSP.

An applicant for the HPSP must submit an accurate and complete application, including a signed written acceptance agreement.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7612(c)(1)(B))

(The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collection requirements in this section under control number 2900-0793.)

[78 FR 51070, Aug. 20, 2013]

§ 17.605 Selection of participants.

(a) *General.* In deciding which HPSP application to approve, VA will first consider applications submitted by applicants entering their final year of education or training and applicants who previously received HPSP scholarships and who meet the conditions of paragraph (f) of this section. Except for paragraph (f) of this section, applicants will be evaluated and selected using the criteria specified in paragraph (b) of this section. If there are a larger number of equally qualified applicants than there are awards to be made, then VA will first select veterans, and then use a random method as the basis for further selection. In selecting participants to receive awards as part-time students, VA may, at VA's discretion—

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7612(b)(5))

(1) Award scholarships geographically to part-time students so that available scholarships may be distributed on a relatively equal basis to students working throughout the VA health care system, and/or

(2) Award scholarships on the basis of retention needs within the VA health care system.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7603(d))

(b) *Selection.* In evaluating and selecting participants, the Secretary will take into consideration those factors determined necessary to assure effective participation in the Scholarship Program. The factors may include, but not be limited to—

(1) Work/volunteer experience, including prior health care employment and Department of Veterans Affairs employment;

(2) Faculty and employer recommendations;

(3) Academic performance; and

(4) Career goals.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7633)

(c) *Selection of part-time students.* Factors in addition to those specified in paragraph (b) of this section, which may be considered in awarding scholarships to part-time students may include, but are not limited to:

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(1) Length of service of a VA employee in a health care facility;

(2) Honors and awards received from VA, and other sources;

(3) VA work performance evaluation;

(4) A recommendation for selection for a part-time scholarship from a VA Medical District.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7452(d)(1))

(d) *Notification of approval.* VA will notify the individual in writing that his or her application has been accepted and approved. An individual becomes a participant in the program upon receipt of such approval by VA.

(e) *Duration of scholarship award.* Subject to the availability of funds for the Scholarship Program, the Secretary will award a participant a full-time scholarship under these regulations for a period of from 1 to 4 school years and a participant of a part-time scholarship for a period of 1 to 6 school years.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7612(c)(1)(A) and 7614(3))

(f) *Continuation awards.* Subject to the availability of funds for the Scholarship Program and selection, the Secretary will award a continuation scholarship for completion of the degree for which the scholarship was awarded if—

(1) The award will not extend the total period of Scholarship Program support beyond 4 years for a full-time scholarship, and beyond 6 years for a part-time scholarship; and

(2) The participant remains eligible for continued participation in the Scholarship Program.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7603(d))

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 2900–0352)

[48 FR 37399, Aug. 18, 1983, as amended at 54 FR 28674, July 7, 1989; 78 FR 51070, Aug. 20, 2013]

§ 17.606 Award procedures.

(a) *Amount of scholarship.* (1) A scholarship award will consist of (i) tuition and required fees, (ii) other educational expenses, including books and laboratory equipment, and (iii) except as provided in paragraph (a)(2) of this section, a monthly stipend, for the duration of the scholarship award. All such

payments to scholarship participants are exempt from Federal taxation.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7636)

(2) No stipend may be paid to a participant who is a full-time VA employee.

(3) The Secretary may determine the amount of the stipend paid to participants, whether part-time students or full-time students, but that amount may not exceed the maximum amount provided for in 38 U.S.C. 7613(b).

(4) In the case of a part-time student who is a part-time employee, the maximum stipend, if more than a nominal stipend is paid, will be reduced in accordance with the proportion that the number of credit hours carried by such participant bears to the number of credit hours required to be carried by a full-time student in the course of training being pursued by the participant.

(5) A full stipend may be paid only for the months the part-time student is attending classes.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7614(2))

(6) The Secretary may make arrangements with the school in which the participant is enrolled for the direct payment of the amount of tuition and/or reasonable educational expenses on the participant's behalf.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7613(c))

(7) A participant's eligibility for a stipend ends at the close of the month in which degree requirements are met.

(b) *Leave-of-absence, repeated course work.* The Secretary may suspend scholarship payments to or on behalf of a participant if the school (1) approves a leave-of-absence for the participant for health, personal, or other reasons, or (2) requires the participant to repeat course work for which the Secretary previously has made payments under the Scholarship Program. Additional costs relating to the repeated course work will not be paid under this program. Any scholarship payments suspended under this section will be resumed by the Secretary upon notification by the school that the participant has returned from the leave-of-absence or has satisfactorily completed the repeated course work and is proceeding